

Short report

HBSC Ireland 2014: Young people's drinking in the North Dublin area

Lorraine Burke and Aoife Gavin

HBSC Ireland, Health Promotion Research Centre, National University of Ireland Galway

Introduction

The Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) study is a cross-national research study conducted in collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Office for Europe and runs on a four-year cycle. In 2014, Ireland participated for the fifth time in the HBSC study (www.nuigalway.ie/hbhc). The overall aims of the HBSC study are to gain new insight into, and increase our understanding of young people's health and well-being, health behaviours and their social context. HBSC collects data on key indicators of health, health attitudes, and health behaviours, as well as the context of health for young people. The study is a school-based survey with information collected from students through self-completion questionnaires in classrooms. HBSC Ireland 2014 was funded by the Department of Health. Further information on the HBSC Ireland can be found at www.nuigalway.ie/hbhc or at www.hbhc.org, the International HBSC website.

The most recent HBSC Ireland study was conducted in 2014 and included 13,611 school children from 3rd class in primary school to 5th year in post-primary school. Overall, 42.2% boys and 57.8% girls participated. Collectively, 230 primary and post-primary schools across Ireland participated in this study. The methods employed comply with the International HBSC protocol and are detailed in the national report from the 2014 survey see <http://www.nuigalway.ie/hbhc/hbhcireland/2014study/>.

Focus of this report

This short report provides a descriptive analysis of the HBSC 2014 survey data comparing school children aged 10-17 years from North County Dublin to the rest of the sample regarding family and peer support, happiness, exercise and physical activity, food and dietary behaviour, school participation, bullying, neighbourhood, risk behaviours (alcohol consumption, smoking, cannabis use) and sexual activity.

The question analysed for Irish schoolchildren aged 10-17 years were:

Family and peer support

- How easy is it for you to talk to (a) mother or (b) father about things that really bother you? With response options: 'Very easy', 'Easy', 'Difficult', 'Very difficult', 'Don't have or see this person'. Responses were recoded as (1) easy, (2) difficult.
- At present how many close male/female friends do you have? With responses options: 'None', 'One', 'Two', 'Three or more'. Responses were recoded as: 3 or more friends of the same gender (1) yes, (2) no.
- Do you have an animal/pet? With response options: 'Yes, of my own', 'Yes, in our family', 'No, but I spend time with animals regularly' and 'No'. Responses were recoded as (1) have a pet, (2) don't have a pet.

Happiness

- In general how do you feel about your life at present? With response options: 'I feel very happy', 'I feel quite happy', 'I don't feel very happy', 'I'm not happy at all'. Responses recoded as (1) happy, (2) not happy.
- Thinking about the last week...have you been happy with the way you are. With response options: 'Never', 'Seldom', 'Quite often', 'Very often', 'Always'. Responses recoded as: happy with the way you are (1) yes, (2) no.

Exercise and Physical Activity

- Over the past 7 days, on how many days were you physically active for a total of at least 60 minutes per day? With response options: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 days. Responses were recoded as: 4 or more days physically active (1) yes, (2) no.

Food and Dietary Behaviour

- How often do you usually have breakfast (more than a glass of milk or fruit juice)? For (a) weekdays the response options were 'I never have breakfast during the week', 'one day', 'two days', 'three days', 'four days', 'five days' and for (b) weekend days the response options were 'I never have breakfast during the weekend', 'I usually have breakfast on only one day of the weekend', 'I usually have breakfast on both weekend days'. Responses were recoded as: eating breakfast 5 or more days a week (1) yes, (2) no.
- How many days a week do you usually eat or drink... coke or other soft drinks that contain sugar? With response options: 'never', 'less than once a week', 'once a week', '2-4 days a week', '5-6 days a week', 'once a day every day', 'every day more than once'. Responses recoded as: Soft drinks daily or more (1) no, (2) yes.

School participation

- In our school the students take part in making the rules. With response options: 'Strongly agree', 'Agree', 'Neither agree nor disagree', 'Disagree', 'Strongly disagree'. Responses recoded as: participate in making school rules (1) no, (2) yes.

Bullying

- How often have you been bullied at school in the past couple of months? With responses were 'I have not been bullied at school in the past couple of months', 'It only happened once or twice', '2 or three times a month', 'about once a week', 'several times a week'. Responses recoded as: ever been bullied (1) no, (2) yes.

Neighbourhood

- Generally speaking, I feel safe in the area where I live. With response options: 'Always', 'Most of the time', 'Sometimes', 'Rarely or never'. Responses recoded as: feel safe where I live (1) yes, (2) no.
- There are good places to spend your free time (e.g. leisure centre, parks, shops). With response options: 'Strongly agree', 'Agree', 'Neither agree nor disagree', 'Disagree', 'Strongly disagree'. Responses recoded as: good places to spend free time (1) agree, (2) neither, (3) disagree.

Risk Behaviours

- How many days (if any) have you smoked cigarettes in your lifetime. With response options: 'Never'; '1-2 days'; '3-5 days'; '6-9 days'; '10-19 days'; '20-29 days'; '30 days (or more)'. Responses recoded as: ever smoked (1) Never, (2) yes.
- How often do you smoke tobacco at present? With response options: 'Every day', 'At least once a week, but not every day', 'Less than once a week', 'I do not smoke'. Responses recoded as: weekly smoking (1) yes, (2) no.
- On how many days (if any) have you drunk alcohol in your lifetime a) In your lifetime or b) in the last 30 days? With response options: 'Never'; '1-2 days'; '3-5 days'; '6-9 days'; '10-19 days'; '20-29 days'; '30 days (or more)'. Responses for (a) recoded as: ever had an alcoholic drink (1) never, (2) yes. Responses for (b) recoded as: had an alcoholic drink in the 30 days (1) no, (2) yes.
- Have you ever had so much alcohol that you were really drunk (a) In your lifetime or (b) in the last 30 days? With response options: 'Never'; 'Yes, once'; 'Yes, 2-3 times', 'Yes, 4-10 times' and 'Yes, more than 10 times'. Responses for (a) recoded as: ever been drunk (1) never, (2) yes. Responses for (b) recoded as: Been drunk in the 30 days (1) no, (2) yes.
- Have you ever taken cannabis (hashish, grass, pot) in your lifetime? With response options: 'Never'; '1-2 days'; '3-5 days'; '6-9 days'; '10-19 days'; '20-29 days'; '30 days (or more)'. Responses recoded as: cannabis use ever (1) yes, (2) no.

Further questions analysed for Irish secondary school children aged 15-17 years were:

Sexual activity

- Have you ever had sexual intercourse? With response options: (1) yes, (2) no.

Findings

The findings are presented below in tables. Overall findings are weighted. Further findings are unweighted and are broken down by gender and age group. Overall, 6.5% of 10 – 17 year olds (777 participants) were from a school in North County Dublin and 93.5% of 10 – 17 year olds (11218 participants) were from a school outside North County Dublin.

Table 1: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report that they find it easy to talk to their mother when something is really bothering them, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		81.7	82.8
Boys	Overall	82.8	84.1
	10-11 years	76.5	88.4
	12-14 years	86.1	86.3
	15-17 years	81.7	77.9
Girls	Overall	80.0	82.2
	10-11 years	85.7	88.2
	12-14 years	79.3	83.0
	15-17 years	75.4	76.8

Table 2: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report that they find it easy to talk to their father when something is really bothering them, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		67.4	70.5
Boys	Overall	69.0	76.7
	10-11 years	60.5	82.6
	12-14 years	69.5	79.8
	15-17 years	73.5	68.0
Girls	Overall	64.5	64.8
	10-11 years	72.6	74.1
	12-14 years	61.0	65.1
	15-17 years	61.3	57.4

*All schools excluding those from the North County Dublin area

Table 3: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report to have 3 or more friends of the same gender, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		85.0	87.2
Boys	Overall	84.1	87.0
	10-11 years	89.1	88.1
	12-14 years	83.1	88.9
	15-17 years	81.9	83.7
Girls	Overall	85.7	87.3
	10-11 years	88.8	88.9
	12-14 years	87.8	88.8
	15-17 years	78.6	84.6

Table 4: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report having a pet of their own or a pet in their family, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		59.4	76.0
Boys	Overall	55.2	76.5
	10-11 years	53.6	77.4
	12-14 years	57.6	76.0
	15-17 years	52.2	76.4
Girls	Overall	63.6	76.8
	10-11 years	66.9	75.1
	12-14 years	60.9	77.8
	15-17 years	63.8	77.2

*All schools excluding those from the North County Dublin area

Table 5: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report being happy with their lives at present, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		87.8	89.9
Boys	Overall	90.2	92.8
	10-11 years	91.4	95.1
	12-14 years	91.0	93.9
	15-17 years	88.0	89.7
Girls	Overall	84.7	87.3
	10-11 years	91.3	95.8
	12-14 years	84.0	87.2
	15-17 years	78.8	81.1

Table 6: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report feeling happy with the way they are, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		60.2	57.2
Boys	Overall	65.5	64.6
	10-11 years	69.6	76.9
	12-14 years	64.9	66.6
	15-17 years	63.5	52.1
Girls	Overall	52.6	50.7
	10-11 years	73.5	76.0
	12-14 years	51.7	51.4
	15-17 years	31.6	31.4

*All schools excluding those from the North County Dublin area

Table 7: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report to be physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on more than 4 days per week, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		73.0	67.6
Boys	Overall	81.5	76.1
	10-11 years	88.9	84.5
	12-14 years	81.2	79.5
	15-17 years	80.3	68.8
Girls	Overall	62.2	60.1
	10-11 years	74.6	79.5
	12-14 years	67.5	65.8
	15-17 years	47.4	46.6

Table 8: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report to eat breakfast 5 or more days per week, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		75.3	78.4
Boys	Overall	78.4	82.3
	10-11 years	88.9	88.1
	12-14 years	79.7	82.2
	15-17 years	73.7	80.1
Girls	Overall	71.6	75.6
	10-11 years	85.5	88.7
	12-14 years	68.0	76.3
	15-17 years	69.8	70.0

*All schools excluding those from the North County Dublin area

Table 9: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report drinking soft drinks that contain sugar at least once a day, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		18.3	12.0
Boys	Overall	17.7	12.4
	10-11 years	14.3	8.1
	12-14 years	17.9	12.3
	15-17 years	19.7	16.0
Girls	Overall	18.8	10.3
	10-11 years	17.5	7.8
	12-14 years	20.4	10.7
	15-17 years	17.8	11.7

Table 10: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report that students at their school participate in making the school rules, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		40.9	34.9
Boys	Overall	40.9	35.8
	10-11 years	44.8	50.9
	12-14 years	45.9	37.0
	15-17 years	28.9	22.1
Girls	Overall	41.0	35.1
	10-11 years	47.9	55.0
	12-14 years	45.3	37.6
	15-17 years	26.7	17.6

*All schools excluding those from the North County Dublin area

Table 11: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report to have been bullied in school (in the past couple of months), by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		30.0	26.1
Boys	Overall	27.6	25.0
	10-11 years	39.3	27.9
	12-14 years	24.8	24.3
	15-17 years	23.7	23.5
Girls	Overall	32.2	27.1
	10-11 years	37.3	31.1
	12-14 years	34.0	27.5
	15-17 years	24.3	23.7

Table 12: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report feeling safe in the area where they live, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		79.5	90.2
Boys	Overall	77.3	92.0
	10-11 years	80.4	93.8
	12-14 years	75.6	92.1
	15-17 years	77.8	90.2
Girls	Overall	80.9	90.0
	10-11 years	86.3	92.5
	12-14 years	84.1	90.4
	15-17 years	69.5	87.7

*All schools excluding those from the North County Dublin area

Table 13: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report that there are good places in their area to spend their free time, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		82.0	59.5
Boys	Overall	83.1	61.9
	10-11 years	82.1	72.4
	12-14 years	83.3	66.1
	15-17 years	83.3	47.7
Girls	Overall	80.0	57.0
	10-11 years	86.7	71.4
	12-14 years	84.8	59.6
	15-17 years	64.6	43.5

Table 14: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report never smoking cigarettes, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		86.2	84.0
Boys	Overall	85.8	84.7
	10-11 years	100.0	95.3
	12-14 years	87.3	91.2
	15-17 years	79.7	72.7
Girls	Overall	86.4	85.2
	10-11 years	94.4	98.3
	12-14 years	91.1	92.1
	15-17 years	74.4	72.6

*All schools excluding those from the North County Dublin area

Table 15: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report smoking cigarettes every week, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		3.8	5.4
Boys	Overall	4.4	5.5
	10-11 years	0.0	1.0
	12-14 years	5.1	3.6
	15-17 years	6.5	11.5
Girls	Overall	3.2	4.4
	10-11 years	1.4	0.5
	12-14 years	2.3	2.7
	15-17 years	6.5	9.0

Table 16: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report never having had an alcoholic drink, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		58.7	58.4
Boys	Overall	55.2	57.9
	10-11 years	66.7	82.8
	12-14 years	69.1	71.9
	15-17 years	27.6	31.3
Girls	Overall	63.2	61.8
	10-11 years	87.7	90.7
	12-14 years	77.0	76.9
	15-17 years	29.0	34.2

*All schools excluding those from the North County Dublin area

Table 17: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report having had an alcoholic drink in the last 30 days, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		19.3	20.0
Boys	Overall	19.2	19.3
	10-11 years	0.0	2.5
	12-14 years	9.3	7.2
	15-17 years	40.9	39.9
Girls	Overall	18.7	18.4
	10-11 years	3.1	0.9
	12-14 years	7.8	6.1
	15-17 years	43.5	38.2

Table 18: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report to have been drunk at least once in the their lifetime, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		22.9	21.1
Boys	Overall	23.6	20.9
	10-11 years	0.0	2.7
	12-14 years	13.3	8.1
	15-17 years	47.4	43.4
Girls	Overall	21.5	18.4
	10-11 years	4.1	0.5
	12-14 years	8.5	6.8
	15-17 years	50.7	38.0

*All schools excluding those from the North County Dublin area

Table 19: Percentage of 10-17 year who report having been drunk in the last 30 days, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		9.5	10.1
Boys	Overall	8.7	9.4
	10-11 years	0.0	0.4
	12-14 years	3.5	2.5
	15-17 years	19.7	20.9
Girls	Overall	10.2	9.0
	10-11 years	1.5	0.1
	12-14 years	3.6	2.7
	15-17 years	25.2	19.3

Table 20: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report having taken cannabis at least once in their lifetime, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		9.6	8.2
Boys	Overall	10.9	8.4
	10-11 years	0.0	0.7
	12-14 years	5.1	2.9
	15-17 years	24.0	17.8
Girls	Overall	7.3	6.2
	10-11 years	2.7	0.1
	12-14 years	3.3	2.0
	15-17 years	16.2	13.2

*All schools excluding those from the North County Dublin area

Table 21: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who report having ever had sex, by age group and region

		North Dublin	Rest of sample*
Overall (weighted)		37.2	26.1
Boys	Overall	40.6	30.9
	15-17 years	40.6	30.9
Girls	Overall	31.5	20.8
	15-17 years	31.5	20.8

*All schools excluding those from the North County Dublin area

Acknowledgements: HBSC Ireland 2014 was funded by the Department of Health. This short report was requested by Louise McCulloch and was completed in November 2016. We would like to acknowledge the children and parents who consented and participated, the management authorities, principals and teachers who helped us to collect the data, the staff at the Health Promotion Research Centre, National University of Ireland Galway, the HBSC Ireland Advisory Board and the International coordinator of HBSC, Dr Jo Inchley of the University of St Andrews, Scotland. Further information on HBSC Ireland is available at www.nuigalway.ie/hbsc.